

5 a field descriptor pointer is acquired. A field descriptor pointed to by the field descriptor pointer is looked up. A field to be examined is determined next. A mask associated with the field descriptor is applied to the field to form a masked field. The masked field is transformed (iconized) to determine if a second match is found. When a second match is found, a second behavioral set is determined and the process is repeated.

10 In one embodiment when the behavioral set is a test set, a score is acquired with the match. The score is compared to a previous score. When the previous score is lower than the score, a test association is examined. In one embodiment, the test association is pushed onto the association stack. When a previous score is not lower than the score, the test association is ignored.

15 When the behavioral set is an exclusion set, a present association is removed from an association stack. When the behavioral set is a continuation set, a related association is returned and processing continues. When the behavioral set is a stack set, a search is continued for a duplicate.

20 Thus there has been described a system and method for performing very complex searches with minimal effort on the part of the user. The searches may be complex enough to include non-traditional actions as a result of the search. In other words, the action may include operations other than just returning information. For instance, the action might be to stop processing a request.

25 The methods described herein can be implemented as computer-readable instructions stored on a computer-readable storage medium

that when executed by a computer will perform the methods described herein.

5 While the invention has been described in conjunction with specific embodiments thereof, it is evident that many alterations, modifications, and variations will be apparent to those skilled in the art in light of the foregoing description. Accordingly, it is intended to embrace all such alterations, modifications, and variations in the appended claims.

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